

BACKGROUND MATERIAL

A R A B S, J E W S,
A N D T H E
1 9 4 8 W A R.

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Machleket Chimuch Habonim,
523 Finchley Road, London, N.W.3.

Some notes on "The Arabs" were recently sent to the Kinim, together with the suggestion that they should be used in conjunction with the Penguin "Islam". Since the last meeting of Mercaz, at which a Sicha on "National Liberation Movements and Al Fatah" was given, there have been second and third thoughts on the question of how to put the subject over as a project for Ma'apilim. So here are some ideas. We would like to thank F.Z.Y. for permission to use some of the material on the Arab Refugees that they produced for a "Teach-In".

(1) Who are the Arabs? - A history. The notes were aimed at supplying some of this background. Some of the questions to be answered are:-

- (a) Is there one Arab nation or several?
- (b) What is pan-Islamism, and what is pan-Arabism, and how do they differ?
- (c) The reasons for the rise and fall of the Islamic Empire? Was it a homogeneous empire?
- (d) Why is most of the Arab world barely on the verge of the 20th century in technology and the 19th century in sociological development?

(2) The Rise of Arab Nationalism.

Must begin by defining nationalism.

- (a) Is nationalism anachronistic in a modern shrinking world?
- (b) The different types of Arab States:-

Iraq)	Jordan)	Feudal.
Syria)	Saudia)	
Egypt)	Lebanon -	Quasi-democracy.
	Military dictatorship.	

- (c) Palestine Arabs - who are they? Have they "always" been there?

(3) National Liberation Movements.

Two types:-

- (a) Revolutionary movements, whose aim is or was to overthrow their own national governments.

Examples: Cuba - Castro
Germany - Hitler
Spain - Franco
Italy - Mussolini.

(b) Liberation Movements, whose aim is to remove a foreign invader.

Examples: India against British Raj.

Irish against British.

Vietnam.

Czechoslovakia against Russia (1968).

French "Maquis" against Nazis.

Partisans against Nazis in all invaded countries.

But partisans come in different varieties, and are not always united among themselves:-

Yugoslavia - Tito (Communist) -v- Mihailovitch (Reactionary).

France - Communists -v- De Gaullists -v- others.

(4) The Palestine Terrorist Groups.

a) What category do they come into? Answer: neither. Jews in Israel are not invaders. Whether the Arabs like it or not, the Jews regard it as home. This is certainly not a revolt against a national government. There isn't only one organisation:- Al Fatah (Yasir Arafat); Palestine Liberation Organisation (Shukeiry); Popular Front for the Liberation of Palestine; and at least a dozen others.

b) How did they come into existence? The Shukeiry group has existed for years; Al Fatah have just celebrated their fifth anniversary (according to "Free Palestine" Vol.1, No. 8, January 1969); so by no stretch of imagination can any of these groups be said to have coalesced as a result of the Six Day War. An analysis of their coming into existence would show that either:-

1. They are the result of the Palestinian Arabs' disillusionment with the Arab States, who have left them to moulder for twenty years in refugee camps. In consequence, the terrorist groups are an independent expression of this resentment, and in consequence their refusal to be party to any signing of a peace treaty between Israel and the Arab States is a logical outcome of this independence.
- or 2. Like the "fedayeen" of pre-1956, who were Egypt-sponsored and trained, these bands are a temporary phenomenon, which will disappear in a few years' time. Unless there is popular support by the Arab peasant, they will undoubtedly wither away. It is difficult to tell how much support there is. From observation of facts, it would seem that the Arab farmer, whether in the Gaza Strip or on the West Bank, has never had it so good, and wants it to go on being that way. Those who are not farmers, and this includes intellectuals, middle-class, those whose interests - politically and for exploitation - are for the refugees, as well as those refugees themselves, are probably prepared to give aid to the terrorist groups. How much, and how actively, are entirely different matters. If any Arab gets killed inadvertently by a bomb left by a terrorist organisation, his relations may feel that it's Israel's fault, because some Israeli ducked in time - but this has always been an unfortunate attribute of Arab terrorism - Arabs have suffered almost as much from it in the past as Jews.

(c) Does Israel have to take cognisance of these terrorist groups?

This question should be split up into sub-questions, but first it must be appreciated that none of the terrorist groups is prepared to concede a "sovereign Israel". The new line, aimed at the New Left, is "We plan to build a state (in the whole of Western Palestine) that will be secular and democratic" and, furthermore, "We plan to liberate the Jews of Palestine from Zionism, which has caused them almost as much suffering as it has caused the Arabs."

So the questions that need answering are:-

1. What would happen to the Al Fatah et alia, if the Arab States were to sit down to negotiate for peace?
2. Might it not be convenient for Arab leaders, who could conceivably sit down to such negotiations, to leave the terrorist status quo, so that even after signing something, the "war could go on"? After all, they could disclaim responsibility for the work of these patriots, and then later proclaim that the peace was obviously unworkable, and that they must accede to the voice of Arab conscience, and tear up the peace-treaty.
3. Even supposing that Yasir Arafat and friends would accept a separate Israel, what boundaries do they visualise? After all:

Some refer to "pre-June '67 boundaries."

Some refer to "pre-June '67 boundaries without the Negev."

Some refer to "Israel as decided by the U.N. Resolution of 29th November, 1947."

Do any of them refer to safe, peaceful guaranteed boundaries?

4. Finally, assuming that Israel were to sit down with Palestinian terrorist groups' leaders, would that not mean a recognition of Israel?

THE 1947 U.N. DECISION AND THE AFTERMATH.

After the report of the U.N. Enquiry Commission for Palestine, the U.N. Majority Report recommending partition was published on August 31st, 1947.

After a preliminary statement by Mr. Jamal Husseini, leader of the Higher Arab Committee, that the Arabs would never agree to any form of partition, and would "fight with all means and with the help of neighbouring Arab countries. to keep Palestine an Arab country for the Arabs", a meeting of the Committee was convened on September 8th, at Lake Success, N.Y. The Conference established that "Arabs will never allow a Jewish State to be established on one inch of Palestine... Not a single Jew will be allowed to migrate to Palestine. Any attempt to impose a solution contrary to the Arabs' birthright will lead to trouble, bloodshed, and probably a third World War."

At the Zionist General Council meeting at Zurich on September 3rd, a resolution giving conditional support to the Majority Report was passed by 61 votes to 6. The Council, while having some reservations about the adequacy of the territorial area proposed for the Jewish State, agreed to give the report further study.

As the date for a final decision on the report drew near, several more meetings of the Arab League Council and Higher Arab Committee were convened to discuss the recommendation. On September 29th, Mr. Jamal Husseini stated at the U.N. Assembly that the Arabs would oppose any scheme for the partition of Palestine "to the last drop of blood", and on October 9th, an Arab League Council meeting adopted a resolution calling on the Arab States having common borders with Palestine to take "military precautions on the Palestine boundaries".

On November 30th, 1948, the U.N. General Assembly met to vote on the Majority Report. The resolution under discussion recommended a termination of the British Mandate in Palestine, and the partition of the country into an Arab and a Jewish State.

International status was envisaged for Jerusalem. The two States were to be bound together by an Economic Union presided over by a joint economic board. They would share a customs union, a joint currency system with a single foreign exchange rate, joint economic development and communications schemes, and a joint operation of ports and airports. Obviously this was a scheme that could only operate successfully if freely accepted by both parties.

The vote of the General Assembly was: 33 for partition, 13 against, with 10 abstentions and 1 absentee. The six Arab delegations (Egypt, Syria, Iraq, Transjordan, the Lebanon, and Yemen) walked out of the Assembly after their leaders had declared that their governments did not consider themselves bound by the resolution and reserved full liberty of action. Soon afterwards, Dr. Hussein Khalidi, Secretary of the Arab Higher Committee, stated that the U.N. decision was regarded by the Arabs as a "declaration of war".

In rather noticable contrast to this, Rabbi Abba Hillel Silver, spokesman for the Jewish Agency, stated in the United Nations:

"If heavy sacrifice is the inescapable condition of a final solution, if it makes possible the immediate re-establishment of the Jewish State, that ideal for which a people has ceaselessly striven, then the Jewish Agency is prepared to recommend the acceptance of the partition solution. That sacrifice would be the Jewish contribution to the solution of a painful problem, and would bear witness to the Jewish people's spirit of international co-operation and its desire for peace."

Later, the fact that the 1947 resolution was never implemented became a favourite hunting ground for the Arabs, but it seems rather difficult to reconcile the preceding facts with statements such as the following by Mr. Saib Salaam, Prime Minister of the Lebanon, at the Plenary Meeting of the U.N. General Assembly:

"Yet even this resolution (the 1947 Partition Resolution), involving as it did grievous wrongs to the Arabs of Palestine, the United Nations was unable to implement. This failure of the United Nations is directly attributable to Israel's defiance of the resolutions of the General Assembly on the Palestine question, and regrettable acquiescence of the United Nations in this defiance." (4th October, 1960, U.N. Doc. A/PV 885 P.41.)

After several more official denunciations of the U.N. resolution during the next few months, King Abdullah of Transjordan, speaking from Amman on April 22nd, 1948, made a statement that could not be interpreted otherwise than as an incitement to war. He declared that the Arab world must take action against Zionism, and issued a call to all Arab armies to join with the Transjordanian army "in a movement to Palestine to retain the Arab character of that country."

Later that day, heavy fighting broke out in Haifa, and contingents of Iraqi and Syrian terrorists, sent in from the neighbouring Arab countries for the purpose, attacked civilians and Haganah personnel. Finally, however, the Haganah gained control of the city.

Lt. General Sir Alan Cunningham, the High Commissioner for Palestine, afterwards stated that "the Arabs themselves were responsible for the outbreak in spite of many warnings", and confirmed that the Haganah had carried out no civilian massacres.

On May 14th, 1948, the new State of Israel proclaimed its independence. On the same day Azzam Pasha, Secretary of the Arab League, announced the Arab intention of conducting a "war of extermination and a momentous massacre which will be spoken of like the Mongolian massacres and the Crusades." At midnight, May 14th/15th, Nokrashy Pasha broadcast from Cairo radio that "orders have been given to the Egyptian armed forces to enter Palestine with the object of restoring security and order to that country."

Israel's successful emergence from her battle for independence should not be allowed to conceal that the war was not of her choosing and that she did not start the fighting.

RESULTS OF WAR - MOVEMENT OF POPULATION.

The very real plight of the Arab refugees has been a vital weapon in the Middle East propaganda war for many years. The one factor on which every account agrees is that the problem originated with the mass Arab exodus from the newly-established State of Israel in May 1948. One vital factor, however, is bitterly disputed. What caused the Arabs to leave?

Since the Arab condemnation of the U.N. Enquiry Commission's recommendation for partition of Palestine, there had been a constant, if small, trickle of Arabs emigrating from Palestine, but as the majority of these were in the monied and trained classes, their integration presented no problem. The first large-scale flight, however, was that from Haifa in April 1948. On April 22nd, heavy fighting broke out in the Haifa area, being, according to the High Commissioner for Palestine, Lt. Gen. Sir Alan Cunningham, "the direct consequence of continuous Arab attacks on Jews during the last four days."

After the Haganah occupation of Haifa, Haganah commanders met Arab leaders in the Town Hall and offered the following terms:-

1. Surrender of all arms and ammunition.
2. Arab "outsiders" such as Syrians and Iraqis (a savage body of terrorists sent in by the neighbouring countries to help "defend" their Palestinian brothers) to be handed over for detention.

3. Non-Arabs, e.g. Germans, to be handed over for trial.
4. Recognition of the Jewish control over the city.

The response of the delegation is recorded in the following extract from a memorandum dated April 27th 1948, submitted by the Arab National Committee in Haifa to the Arab League Government:-

"The delegation (of the Haifa Arab National Committee) decided that the signing of a truce on the conditions of the Haganah Command would be a disgrace to the (Arab) population of Haifa... Thus, when the delegation entered the conference room it proudly refused to sign the truce, and asked that the evacuation of (Arab) population and their transfer to the neighbouring Arab countries be facilitated... The military and civil authorities expressed their profound regret at this grave decision. The Mayor of Haifa (Mr. Shabetai Levi) adjourned the meeting with a passionate appeal to the (Arab) delegation to reconsider its decision."

When it became obvious that the delegation would not reconsider, the Haganah agreed to their request, and offered a five-day truce while it was being implemented. They also issued a proclamation to Haifa Jews, enjoining strict respect for Arab property and religious places, under pain of severe punishment. By the next day, over 40,000 Arabs had left Haifa.

As May 14th approached, the trickle of emigrants swelled to a flood. In an attempt to arrest the exodus, Israel's Proclamation of Independence called upon "the sons of the Arab people dwelling in Israel to keep the peace and to play their part in building the State, on the basis of full and equal citizenship and due representation in all its institutions, provisional and permanent." Similar appeals were broadcast by radio, leaflets and megaphones.

Obviously, however, something must have caused all these people to pack up and leave their homes. Statements such as the following, by Mr. Emil Ghory, addressing the Special Political Committee of the U.N. General Assembly, as an individual Arab refugee, shows very clearly where the Arabs placed the blame:

"It had been those (Zionist) acts of terror, accompanied by wholesale deportations, which had caused the exodus of the Palestinian Arabs... Sixteen days later, the Security Council, in another resolution, had reminded the Mandatory Power that it was responsible for the maintenance of peace and order in Palestine, and had called in particular on the Arab Higher Committee and the Jewish Agency to cease all activities of a military or para-military nature, as well as acts of violence, terrorism, and sabotage. That had been the moment chosen by the Zionist leaders to launch military attacks against Arab civilians in order to expel the greatest possible number of them from Palestine." (Nov. 17th, 1960. U.N. Doc. ASPC/SR.202, p.9).

This statement seems straightforward enough, laying the blame squarely on the doorstep of the Israelis. But was this the true explanation? The Arab Press appeared to think differently:-

"The Arab States, which have encouraged the Palestine Arabs to leave their homes temporarily in order to be out of the way of the Arab invasion army, have failed to keep their promises to help these refugees..." ("Falastin", Jordan daily, Feb. 19th, 1949).

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"Who brought the Palestinians to Lebanon as refugees... who brought them over in dire straits and penniless...? The Arab States, and Lebanon among them did it." ("Koul Shai", Lebanese weekly, August 19th, 1951.)

"The Arab Governments told us 'Get out so that we can get in!' So we got out, but they did not get in." ("Ad Difaa"?, Jordan daily, September 6th, 1964.)

But perhaps the most categorical contradiction of Mr. Ghory's 1960 statement is in a quote by the then Secretary-General of the Palestine Arab Higher Committee, a certain Mr. Emil Ghory, on 6th September, 1948:

"The fact that there are these refugees is the direct consequence of the action of the Arab States in opposing partition and the Jewish State. The Arab States agreed on this policy unanimously, and they must share in the solution of the problem." ("Telegraph", Lebanese daily.)

1. The Releasing of Blocked Bank Accounts.

In September 1951, the Palestine Conciliation Commission submitted, amongst several proposals towards a peace settlement, that the Governments of Egypt, Jordan, Lebanon, Syria and Israel, should agree upon the mutual release of all blocked bank accounts and their payability in Pounds Sterling. In October of the following year, acting upon this resolution, the Palestine Conciliation Commission announced that the Israeli Government had agreed to release unconditionally all blocked bank accounts belonging to Arab refugees. The accounts, estimated at £4,500,000., would be released in stages, to be determined by the availability of foreign currency. The scheme carried out through the agency of Barclays Bank Ltd., London, came officially into force on March 1st, 1953.

Up to 1964, however, Egypt hindered completion of the transferred accounts by refusing to allow transfer to refugees residing in areas under its control.

There is no evidence that the Arab States made any effort to release accounts held in their banks.

2. Family Reunion Schemes.

In the General Assembly resolution of December 11th 1948, paragraph 1 states "refugees wishing to return to their homes and live in peace" should be allowed to do so. The resolution instructed the Palestine Conciliation Commission to facilitate the repatriation, resettlement and rehabilitation of the refugees. The Commission, in conference with Arab and Israeli delegates at Lausanne on July 27th, 1948, accepted an Israeli proposal, that the Governments of the Arab States should appoint representatives who, in conjunction with Israeli representatives, would arrange the return to Israel of refugees separated from their families by the war; on August 2nd they also agreed to discuss a plan, whereby Israel would admit a certain number of refugees on condition that the Arab countries would absorb the remainder, and that any scheme worked out, should be incorporated within a general peace settlement. On these terms, Israel was prepared to allow back 100,000 refugees, who, together with 160,000 Arabs already in Israel, totalled 260,000; or one quarter of the whole population of Israel.

Israel announced that the number to be admitted would include 25,000 already returned, and the rest to return under the reunion scheme, and that she would be ready to receive these refugees as soon as the U.N. proclaimed a state of peace - without, however, waiting for formal signatures of a peace treaty with the Arabs.

In the next session of the Palestine Conciliation Commission a progress report was given on the Family Reunion Scheme. There were 921 refugees in Lebanon and about 500 in Jordan who had so far been authorised to rejoin their families in Israel, but only 523 had returned from Lebanon and 267 from Jordan during December and January. A list of 250 refugees authorised to return had been submitted to the Egyptian authorities, and discussion on reunion of families was in progress between Israeli and Syrian representatives.

In the UNWRA report for 1951-2 it was stated that Israel had assumed responsibility for 19,000 refugees from Lebanon, where it was felt that no opportunities existed for rehabilitation or integration of refugees.

Compensation and Repatriation.

On December 11th, 1948, a General Assembly resolution was passed, of which paragraph 11 reads as follows. "...resolves that the refugees wishing to return to their homes and live in peace with their neighbours, should be permitted to do so, at the earliest practicable date, and that compensation should be paid for the property of those choosing not to return, and for loss of, or damage to property which under principles of international law, or in equity should be made good by the Governments or authorities responsible."

The Palestine Conciliation Commission reaffirmed this in September 1951, but little action was taken, because no general peace settlement, encompassing these measures was forthcoming. However, in October 1959, at the U.N., Mr. Abba Eban of the Israeli Parliament announced that Israel would be prepared to concede the repatriation of refugees without awaiting a general Arab-Israel peace settlement, if she could be financially aided, internationally, to help settle the refugees' claims, and if the refugees could be re-integrated into the host countries. He stated that even if an overall peace settlement could not be reached, at least this pressing problem could be settled separately.

This proposal was reiterated by subsequent Israeli Ministers at U.N. sessions, and on June 23rd, 1961, President Kennedy wrote letters to the heads of five Arab States, pledging aid to the refugees on a basis of repatriation and compensation for lost property, to help eliminate tension. (The United States were already subscribing over 70% of the total UNWRA budget.)

By 1963, with both Arabs and Israelis refusing to yield on the matter of mass repatriation, a 21-nation U.N. resolution was passed noting with deep regret that no substantial progress had been made in the programme for re-integration of refugees by repatriation or resettlement.

Israel's claim is that she could not cope with the social, economic and political consequences of such an overwhelming influx of Arabs as would occur with repatriation, and could never afford without help, to compensate the refugees. The Arabs stand rigid in their firm demand for mass repatriation and compensation as the only conceivable solution to the problem, and despite their militant platform, for the "rights" of the refugees, refuse with the exception of Jordan to grant citizenship to their refugee populace.

In December of 1963, Mr. Moneim Rifai, the Arab spokesman, declared that a solution to the refugee problem was only possible on the following conditions:-

- a) Israeli recognition of the rights of the refugees.
- b) A cessation of Jewish immigration into Israel.
- c) Refugees should have a choice of repatriation or compensation.
- d) The appointment of a U.N. custodian to safeguard and maintain the Arab refugee property in Israel.

Problems Encountered with Regard to Proposed Peace Moves.

On November 19th, 1949, suggestions were made at the U.N. Economic Survey Mission for the Middle East, for the rehabilitation of refugees, recommending that they begin work where they were living whilst awaiting settlement decisions. Mr. Gordon Clapp, an American irrigation engineer, submitted recommendations on pilot demonstration schemes for the development of four areas of swamp reclamation. These schemes, had they been undertaken, could have provided work for about half of the refugees. They would have formed a basis for long-term development, by demonstrating to the Arab Governments how projects on a larger scale can be accomplished. However, the schemes were not adopted by the host Governments, and this is explained by two clauses in the UNWRA report for 1953-4, in which it was stated that certain factors had prevented rehabilitation plans from being wholly or partially successful. Firstly, the fear of the refugees that their rehabilitation would prejudice their rights to repatriation and compensation, and secondly, that the Arab Governments were unwilling to take or approve action which the refugees might consider prejudicial to their rights. Thus it was, that in 1955, UNWRA reported that all its relief budget had been consumed, but that owing to the obstruction and lack of co-operation of the Arab governments, the rehabilitation fund was still intact.

In the years between 1951 and 1954, both Syria and Egypt had agreed to co-operate with UNWRA on refugee resettlement plans, but both refused to comply when action was demanded of them. However, in the UNWRA report for 1951-2, it was related that in Jordan, a development bank, a housing and rural community project, and an agricultural co-operative, had been established, and that in Iraq and Lybia willingness had been indicated to absorb several thousand refugees with special skills.

By June, 1959, some refugees had been aided financially by UNWRA to emigrate from camps in Lebanon and Jordan to countries where they could find jobs. Egypt and Syria allowed no movement of refugees from their camps, and Egypt joined with Lebanon in requesting that UNWRA immediately arrest emigration of the refugees.

For some years after the 1948 war, Egypt had refused even to allow UNWRA officials into the Gaza strip, where refugees outnumbered the indigenous population by two to one. In fact, most of the refugees, and the Arab States, remained opposed to any large scale resettlement projects that implied integration in the host countries, and no hope of eventual return to Israel.

Jews in Arab Countries.

People are totally unaware of what is really going on in the Middle East. They hear of the wars; of independence, Suez, and the crisis of 1967, and they hear a great deal of propaganda, regarding the state of the Arab refugees in Israel, but know little of the Jews that are living in the Arab countries, and the atrocities and hardships that they are undergoing.

EGYPT.

In the last Egyptian census (1947) more than 60,000 Jews were registered as resident, but since then the number has dwindled considerably. When in 1948 Egypt joined the other Arab countries in invading Israel, there were several anti-Jewish decrees. Severe measures were taken against those suspected of Zionism, and the Jews generally had a hard time of it. Since that time, the Jews of Egypt have lived in a state of constant terror. In 1956, following the Sinai crisis, hundreds of Jews were arrested and imprisoned in wretched conditions. Following this there was a whole series of anti-Jewish measures, for example:- bank accounts were frozen, property was confiscated and Jewish employees were dismissed. Consequently, many Jews left Egypt and the majority of these made their new home in Israel. During the June war of 1967, it is estimated that about 2,500 Jews were resident in Egypt. The Egyptians treated these people abominably; they were arrested and kept in prison under inhuman conditions, and furthermore, were subjected to atrocities similarly practised by the Nazis.

LIBYA.

In Libya, after the second world war, there were about 35,000 Jews. During the war these Jews suffered very badly, but after its liberation, Libya came under British rule, although anti-Jewish propaganda was still prevalent.

In November 1945, following the anti-Jewish riots in Egypt, Libya had a three-day "pogrom" during which 130 Jewish men, women and children were brutally murdered (their lives were spared only if they converted to Islam). Property was looted and burned. Following this, more than 31,000 Jews left for Israel. Since then, another 2,000 have also left Libya to settle in the Jewish State.

Although in 1967 Libya was less actively involved in the Middle East crisis, considerable hostility was shown towards the 5,000 Jews living there. Rioting and burning of Jewish property took place, and eighteen Jews were murdered in Tripoli. One hundred Jews were able to escape, and many of them found their way to Italy.

SYRIA AND THE LEBANON.

Between 1943 and 1947, 16,000 Jews left Syria, the majority of them making their new homes in Israel. By 1960 a further 10,000 had left, although this was by no means easy for them, and if caught escaping they were severely punished. Those who remained behind were subject to all sorts of restrictions, for example; they could no longer buy and sell property, and their bank accounts were frozen.

However, while the Syrian Jews have suffered from time to time, the Jews of the Lebanon lived in comparative peace.

IRAQ AND THE YEMEN.

In 1949 the Jews of Iraq were in a state of panic, because of street attacks, burglaries, and an alarming number of cold-blooded murders. By 1950 situation was worse, since the Iraqi government wanted to drive them out to Israel. The government succeeded, for by the end of 1951, the number of Jews that had left Iraq for Israel totalled approximately 125,000.

The Jews of the Yemen started emigrating to Israel as early as the 18th century and this has continued slowly ever since. In 1948 the Yemenite Jews were suffering considerable hardships, so that operation "Magic Carpet" was initiated. It was in fact a massive air-lift, and about 45,000 Jews were flown from Aden to Israel.

During the June war there was no news of the state of Iraqi Jews. On 18th June, 1967, 132 Adeni Jews left Aden for Britain and Israel. Only two remained behind, and they were both too ill to travel. Previously the Jews of Aden had been the subject of mob violence by the Arabs.

THE MAGHREB.

The Maghreb consists of Morocco, Algeria and Tunisia. Numerous Jews have lived there, and for centuries they have been exposed to every sort of oppression and ill-treatment.

In Tunisia during June 1967 there were several anti-Jewish riots. These deeply shocked the government, and President Bourguiba personally apologised to the Chief Rabbi of the country and paid for the repairs to the damaged synagogues.

In Morocco, too, there were anti-Jewish riots, but under the authority of King Hassan, strong measures were taken to prevent any molesting of the minority Jewish community.

In Algeria, although having an extremist attitude towards Israel, the Algerian Jews were treated very well and no riots against them are known to have taken place.

Since the end of the June war, no further arrests or riots are known to have occurred in any of the Arab countries; and one or two of them have even encouraged their Jewish residents to emigrate to Israel.

Figures of Immigrants to Israel from Arab countries since 1947.

Aden	7,000
Algeria	128,500
Egypt	77,500
Iraq	126,000
Lebanon	7,000
Libya	30,000
Morocco	275,000
Syria	12,000
Tunisia	75,000
Yemen	<u>45,000</u>
Total	<u>783,000</u>

Not all of these were forced to leave, and many of them left voluntarily. 12. for example, those of the North African communities.

MINORITIES IN ISRAEL.

1) General.

The number of inhabitants belonging to religious or national minority groups totalled approximately 300,000 in 1968. They are subdivided:-

- a. Moslem Arabs: Totalling 200,000 approximately in Israel prior to June 1967, there are considerably more since.
- b. Christians: 54,000 (pre-June 1967) may be divided into:-
Christian Arabs - the majority, indigenous population.
European Christians - the monks, nuns, etc.
- c. Druzes: A distinct sect deviating from Islam resides in the Middle East in this area, called Djebel Druze. Pre-1967 numbering approximately 26,000, they have been joined by cousins of the Golan (6,500).
- d. Splinter Groups:
Bahais, with their centre at Haifa, number 200, far more live in Persia, U.S.A., and Europe.
Ahmedis, numbering 400, are a Moslem sect living principally in Kababir, Carmel, others in India.
Circassians, national group from the Caucasus region in Russia embracing Islam, 2,000 with a small number from cousins living in the Golan.
Karaites and Samaritans are sects of the Jewish faith, largely increased since the June War to 300.

The minorities in Israel enjoy the same rights and bear the same obligations as all other Israel citizens. They are, however, exempt from military service, with the notable exception of the Druze.

Israel extends its services and facilities, maintaining a separate educational network with Arabic as the language of instruction, and aids in upholding their traditions and maintaining their religious institutions. The various religious communities enjoy full autonomy. Following the "millet" system of Turkish and Mandate rule, each recognised community has its own religious court dealing with certain matters of personal status (marriage, divorce, inheritance, etc.).

Israel, from necessity, had initially to maintain military administration in certain areas where minorities were often the majority of the population, for example, in the border areas. This regime affected life only to a limited extent, and in 1963 travel limitations were entirely abolished except for six small strategic villages.

2) The Arabs in Israel.

There were 286,000 Arabs in Israel prior to 1967, the majority being Moslem, but with a sizeable Christian faction. This represents 14% of the total population of the State of Israel. 70,000 approximately live in the two main Arab towns on the Galilee, Nazareth and Shfar'am, where Christian Arabs form a majority, but there are also numerous Moslem Arabs in Haifa, Jaffa, Acre, Ramle and Lod. There are approximately 30,000 semi-nomadic Bedouin, mostly occupying the grazing area of the Negev, particularly in the vicinity of Beersheva, but also to be found in the Galilee.

Security:

Prior to the June War, 1967, the Arabs created a security problem, since a large number of them lived close to the armistice lines; in fact, several villages were divided in two by the realities of war, and several families were left stranded either side of the border.

It is, however, important to note that these security measures only applied in the border areas, were applied to Jews, Druzes, as well as the Arab in these areas, and were enforced not by the army but by the Border Police, many of whom were from the Druze villages.

The restrictions took the form of passes which people living in these areas had to possess, if they wished to travel outside of their local area. There was rarely any difficulty in obtaining these passes, but Arabs known or suspected of being hostile to Israel were only issued with short-term passes - for obvious reasons.

Gradually these restrictions were minimised with time:-

1948: passes were needed to travel even to the next village.
1954: passes were required to travel outside local demarcated areas.
1959: passes not now needed to travel to major cities or coastal settlements.
1966: all military restrictions abolished.

The unhappy but crucial fact was that although these restrictions applied only to the border areas, it was in these areas that the Moslem Arabs were predominant. The Arabs do not serve in the Israel Defence Forces, in case they find themselves with "a conflict of conscience".

Settlement:

Arabs cultivate 100,000 acres of a total area of the State of Israel of approximately 8,000 square miles. They also farm and graze on large areas in the Negev that are dependent on an unreliable rainfall. Government grants have helped the Arab farmers to increase their output six-fold, and the average Arab village has greatly prospered since 1948, and possesses electricity, water, gas, etc.

Since the June War, it has been possible to compare the Arab villages in Israel with those on the West Bank of the Jordan. The village of Barta'a in the hills of Samaria is a good example of the comparisons. The village was almost evenly divided by the 1948 armistice lines, which were virtually ignored by the inhabitants of the village. The people in the Jordanian sector soon learned the benefits of the Israeli doctor, who made frequent visits to the other side, and was much nearer to them than any Jordanian clinic. For some time the Jordanian school children attended school in Israel.

Even after the armistice was signed at Rhodes, the Mukhtar of the village still officiated in both sectors.

Similarly, at Beit Safafa, an Arab village near Jerusalem, which was divided by the armistice lines, the border became quite distinctive at night, because the Israeli sector was illuminated from the supply of electricity, with light in every home, whereas the Jordanian sector remained in darkness. Furthermore, in many of the houses in the Israeli sector, gas stoves, refrigerators, and even television sets were to be found.

Citizenship:

The allegation that the Arabs are second-class citizens in Israel has been a prominent source of propaganda. To a small extent this is felt to be so, because out of fear, many Jewish citizens regard them as such, just as many regard Sephardim in the same light. As far as the State is concerned, however, there is now very little differentiation between the inhabitants, and laws have been passed to see that this is so.

Arabic is the second official language in Israel, and together with Hebrew and English, is on all public signs and announcements. It is used, with Hebrew, in the Law Courts, in the Knesset, and on bank notes; summaries of Supreme Court decisions are published in Arabic for the convenience of Arab lawyers.

Most restrictions have now been abolished; Arabs are free to move about quite freely. There are Arab co-operatives, bus operators, political parties and labour unions.

Eighty percent of the Arabs (excluding Bedouins) live in villages which have their own local authorities run by fellow Arabs. The Israeli government provides half the total expenditure for Arab municipalities. In 1948, only five Arab villages had piped water; this figure has now reached 59 in 1960 - virtually every village.

Education:

In 1960 every Arab village had an elementary school, according to Israeli law, where elementary education is compulsory and free. In 1967, prior to the war, there were 140 Arabs at the Hebrew University and 380 at the Haifa Technion. Since the war, the numbers have increased with a number of Arabs from the West Bank entering Israeli universities.

Government Policy:

This has always been to integrate the Arabs into the life of the State, and encourage their economic and social advance. All Israelis over 18 are enfranchised - Arab and Jew alike - and every Israeli citizen has complete freedom of faith. Matters of personal status, for example, marriage, wills, divorce, guardianship, etc., come under the religious courts. Moslem and Christian courts sometimes have a jurisdiction that exceeds that of the Jewish courts. There are only two restrictions on the courts; that there be no marriage of girls under 16, and no polygamy.

Social Conditions:

Arabs are able to affiliate to the Histadrut through their own political parties. Only one such party has been made illegal, El Ard, which openly and actively agitated for an Arab revolt. Arabs are strongly represented in the Israeli Labour Party, Mapam, and the two Communist Parties, one of which, the New Communists, is predominantly run by Arabs.

The number of Arabs in the civil service is increasing, although admittedly the government is reluctant to appoint them to high places for security reasons.

The average Arab income is IL.7,000 p.a. and is only slightly lower than the average Jewish income. IL.7,350 p.a.

The Arab death rate has fallen from 20 per 1,000 in 1947 to 6.1 per 1,000 in 1965, and the infant mortality rate has fallen phenomenally compared to that in Arab countries.

Arabs receive equal treatment with Jews in their work - equal pay and equal security, that is, rest, accident insurance, vacation, hours of work, etc. Nowhere in the Middle East is the average Arab labourer's standard of living as high as it is in Israel.

Contrary to many allegations from Arab propaganda, the position of the Arab in Israel since 1948 is far better than his brother in neighbouring Arab States, and the position of Arabs on the West Bank and in Gaza is rapidly improving. Given peace on their borders, the Jewish citizens of Israel would treat their Arab citizens as equals, as in fact the Law of Israel instructs.

3) Druze.

The Druze follow a faith that has its origin in Egypt, in the 10th and early 11th century C.E., when it separated from Islam. Suffering frequent persecutions in Egypt, and later in Lebanon and Syria, they occupied an area to the south of these countries, stretching from the Carmel mountains to Mount Hermon, the Djebel Druze. Persecution made them bold warriors, and their distrust and differences with the neighbouring Moslem Arabs developed into hereditary hatred. The Druze settled in the Galilee in the 16th century, and because of the persecution they experienced, their religion became one of a secret nature in which few are "initiated". They worship a monotheistic deity, with Jethro the father-in-law of Moses - as their principle prophet. It is impossible to become a Druze by conversion, since in the picturesque words of one of their leaders, "There are very few places in Heaven and we have to save these for the Druze."

Their persecution by their neighbours under Arab, Turkish and even British rule, has brought them very close to the Jewish settlers, and an uncanny bond of friendship has now developed between Jew and Druze. Most of the 26,000 Druze are farmers, living in villages of Western and Central Upper Galilee, in the two villages Usafiya and Daliyat el-Karmel on Mount Carmel, and in Haifa.

Despite their ties with the Druze of the Golan, who with the Circassian Moslems remain the only inhabitants of the area administered by Israel, the Druze have been loyal citizens of the State, extending that early friendship into real bonds of peace - a number of them were members of the Irgun during war time. They fought in the Haganah with the Jews against the Moslem Arabs, and were tenacious and very brave soldiers. To this day, they remain the only minority that volunteered for service in the Israel Defence Forces, and many make excellent intelligence Border Policemen. In recognition of their loyalty and service, their status after the June War was altered from a separate minority, to full citizens, with all duties that Jewish citizens accept.

The Druze of the Golan, who led a miserable existence under the Syrian administration, are now living very happily, protected by Israel, freely able to marry Druze living in Galilee. There have been a number of resolutions by the Druze representative in the Knesset to integrate the Golan completely with the State of Israel, and to make them full citizens, as their cousins in the Galilee.

The Druze have shown that given understanding and friendship, ethnic
16. factions can live in harmony, and boundaries are only lines on a map.

Chronological Order.

212 (iii)	19th November 1948 (General Assembly)	
194 (lil)	11th December 1948	"
302 (iv)	8th December 1949	"
393 (v)	2nd December 1950	"
394 (v)	14th December 1950	"
512 (vi)	26th January 1952	"
513 (vi)	26th January 1952	"
614 (vii)	6th November 1952	"
720 (viii)	27th November 1953	"
818 (ix)	4th December 1954	"
916 (x)	3rd December 1955	"
1018 (xi)	28th February 1957	"
1191 (xii)	12th December 1957	"
1315 (xiii)	12th December 1958	"
1456 (xiv)	9th December 1959	"
1604 (xv)	21st April 1961	"
1725 (xvi)	20th December 1961	"
1856 (xvii)	20th December 1962	"
1912 (xviii)	3rd December 1963	"
2000 (xix)	10th February 1965	"
2002 (xx)	15th February 1965	"
2154 (xxi)	17th November 1966	"
2252 (es-v)	4th July 1967	"
	22nd November 1967 (Security Council)	
2341 A (xxii)	19th December (General Assembly)	
2341 B (xxii)	19th December	"

All the above Resolutions are specifically on the subject of the Palestinian Arab Refugees, with the exception of the Resolution of 22nd November 1967, which mentions the Refugee Problem within the greater context of a settlement of the Middle East problem as a whole. However, because of the importance of this one particular Resolution in a study of the problem as a whole, it is included.

Origins of the Problem.

The progress report of the U.N. Mediator for Palestine of 16th September, 1948 (A/648) said that the refugees were in urgent need of assistance, and that the U.N. affirms the right of refugees to return to their homes, goods, and occupations. It is significant, however, that no mention is made whatsoever

about Jewish Refugees from the Arab lands. As a consequence of this report, U.N. Relief for Palestine Refugees (UNRPR) was established on 1st December 1949 after Resolution 212 (iii) and assumed responsibility for providing food, housing, requisites, medical supplies and other essentials for the Palestinian refugees.

On 8th December, 1949, Resolution 302 (iv) created UNRWA, the significant paragraph in the Resolution being No. 7, which read as follows:

7. (The General Assembly) Establishes the United Nations Relief and Works Agency for Palestine Refugees in the Near East:

- (a) To carry out in collaboration with local governments the direct relief and works programmes as recommended by the Economic Survey Mission.
- (b) To consult with the interested Near Eastern Governments concerning measures to be taken by them preparatory to the time when international assistance for relief and works projects is no longer available.

UNRWA was to take over the assets and liabilities of UNRPR on 1st April 1950, from that date on be the sole UN Agency with responsibility for the refugees. (UNRPR had worked in co-operation with various other specialised agencies, both of Government and U.N., such as UNICEF, the International Red Cross, the League of Red Cross Societies, and other voluntary agencies.

The estimate contained in the Resolution of the cost of UNRWA was as follows:

33.7 million dollars for direct relief and works, 1st January - 31st December 1950, made up of 20.2 million dollars for works programmes 1st January 30th June 1951, all inclusive of administrative costs; and that Direct Relief should be terminated not later than 31st December 1950, unless otherwise determined by the General Assembly at its 5th Regular Session.

It is clear that this paragraph, with its mention of cessation of Relief Funds, intends that the work of UNRWA should be the rapid rehabilitation of Refugees, i.e. a "humane eradication" of the problem. The failure of UNRWA in this respect is due to a multitude of reasons, inefficiency and corrupt administration often being cited, plus the obvious one of the Arab Governments' resistance to seeing the Refugees rehabilitated, because of the valuable political capital the maintenance of the Refugee problem gives to the Arab leadership.

In Israel, UNRWA provided two types of relief: (i) To Jews who had fled from the Arab States into Israel; and (ii) Arabs displaced from one area to another. Initially there were some 17,000 Jewish Refugees receiving relief. 14,000 of these were absorbed into the economic life of the state, and no longer needed relief, by the end of 1949. Of the Arabs in Israel, 31,000 initially received relief, the number dropping to 24,000 by August 1950.

In the Arab countries, UNRWA started with 957,000 refugees, dispersed as follows:

	<u>Lebanon</u>	<u>Syria</u>	<u>Jordan</u>	<u>Gaza</u>	<u>Israel</u>
June 1951:	106,753	80,499	465,450	199,789	23,507
June 1952:	104,000	84,000	470,000	204,000	19,000

The estimated annual natural increase in June was 22-25,000.

1949 - 1967.

The bulk of the Resolutions mentioned previously seem to have as their main purpose, keeping the General Assembly aware that the problem still exists. The subjects mentioned in the texts of the Resolutions are expected: Desire for reintegration, repatriation and resettlement of refugees, thanks to the agencies concerned, for their work in the area, calls for the co-operation of the governments concerned in the problems, and in more recent years, on the critical financial position of UNRWA, and calls on the non-contributing countries to pay their share. Nearly all the Resolutions quote paragraph 11 of the U.N. Resolution 194 (iii) of 11th December, 1948, and call for its rapid implementation. The paragraph reads as follows:

(The General Assembly) 11. Resolves that the refugees wishing to return to their homes and live in peace with their neighbours should be permitted to do so at the earliest practicable date, and that compensation should be paid for the property of those choosing not to return, and for loss of or damage to property which, under principles of international law or in equity, should be made good by the Government or authorities responsible.

Instructs the Conciliation Commission to facilitate the repatriation, resettlement, and economic and social rehabilitation of the refugees, and the payment of compensation, and to maintain close relations with the Director of UNRPR, and, through him, with the appropriate organs and agencies of the U.N.

Much has been made of this paragraph in the considerable volume of the Arab propaganda that was dispensed in this eighteen-year period, but it is noticeable that while the propaganda has emphasised the parts "refugees wishing to return to their homes ... should be permitted to do so", and "compensation should be paid for the property of those choosing not to return", no comment has been forthcoming on the full statement - "refugees wishing to return to their homes, and live in peace with their neighbours, should be permitted to do so". Also, on the subject of compensation, Arab propaganda has been similarly reticent on the part of the Resolution stating: "compensation ... should be made good by the Government or authorities responsible". Responsibility is an odd thing nowadays, those that have it rarely say anything about it, for many different reasons. In this case the responsibility seems fairly obvious, as are the reasons for keeping quiet about them.

Also, Paragraph 7 of the same Resolution states that there should be free access to the Holy Places in Palestine, a paragraph which is rarely quoted in company with its companion paragraph 11.

The Resolution of 22nd November, 1967. This Resolution has been the subject of much discussion, and as such is often quoted and far too frequently misquoted, or quoted out of context. The full text of the Resolution is as follows:-

"The Security Council,

Expressing its continuing concern with the grave situation in the Middle East.

Emphasising the inadmissibility of the acquisition of territory by war and the need to work for a just and lasting peace in which every state in the area can live in security.

Emphasising further that all Member States in their acceptance of the Charter of the United Nations have undertaken a commitment to act in accordance with Article 2 of the Charter.

- 1) Affirms that the fulfilment of Charter principles requires the establishment of a just and lasting peace in the Middle East, which should include the application of both the following principles:
 - i) Withdrawal of Israeli armed forces from territories occupied in the recent conflict.
 - ii) Termination of all claims or states of belligerency and respect for and acknowledgment of the sovereignty, territorial integrity and political independence of every state in the area and their right to live in peace within secure and recognised boundaries free from threats or acts of force.
- 2) Affirms further the necessity
 - (a) For guaranteeing freedom of navigation through international waterways in the area;
 - (b) For achieving a just settlement of the refugee problem;
 - (c) For guaranteeing the territorial inviolability and political independence of every state in the area, through measures including the establishment of demilitarised zones.
- 3) Requests the Secretary-General to designate a special representative to proceed to the Middle East to establish and maintain contact with the states concerned in order to promote agreement and assist efforts to achieve a peaceful and accepted settlement in accordance with the provisions and principles in this Resolution.
- 4) Requests the Secretary-General to report to the Security Council on the progress of the efforts of the Special Representative as soon as possible.

The Resolution was adopted unanimously by the Council, whose members were: Mali (President), America, Russia, Britain, France, Nationalist China, India, Japan, Canada, Nigeria, Ethiopia, Brazil, Argentina, Denmark and Bulgaria. Also participating in the meeting, but not voting, were: Israel, Egypt, Jordan and Syria.

Political capital has been made by Russia and the Arab States, of Sections 1) (i) and 2) (b), of course, with careful attention being paid to ignoring sections 1) (ii) and 2) (a) and (c). It is important to realise that the Resolution is designed to be implemented in toto, not just the sections acceptable to one of the factions involved.

The Resolution was noticeable in placing a less urgent emphasis on the refugees than on the other factors in the dispute. One would think that the refugee problem is one that should be tackled first, without waiting for a political settlement, involving, as it does, a continuous and continuing humane problem. It seems unlikely that a continuation of the string of Resolutions on the subject will produce any beneficial solution of the problem, because of the intransigence of the governments involved, and the complex nature of the dispute. One fact that emerges from the great number of words published in the Resolutions over the years is the gradual breakdown of UNRWA, both in organisation in the field and eliciting financial support, the latter being another classic case of turning a blind eye to one's responsibilities, by the governments who have consistently refused to pay their share.

POSTSCRIPT TO "THE ARAB REFUGEE PROBLEM"

By Sidney L. Shipton, LL.B.

Although this pamphlet was written before the momentous events of June, 1967, the basic fundamentals remain the same, although the details differ.

According to the UNRWA, at the beginning of 1967, there were 1,330,077 registered refugees, as follows:-

714,763	(37%	of total population)	- Jordan.
311,846	(69%	" " ")	- Gaza Strip.
161,262	(8%	" " ")	- Lebanon.
142,206	(3%	" " ")	- Syria.

After the Six Day War, it is estimated that 323,000 Arabs fled from either their homes or refugee camps, of which 113,000 were "old" Arab refugees, i.e. pre-1967 registered refugees. The breakdown is as follows:-

178,000	(including 93,000 "old" refugees)	to Jordan.
107,000	(" 17,000 " ")	to Syria.
38,000	(" 3,000 " ")	to Egypt.

These figures are almost certainly inflated and Israeli census figures are less in each case. In any event, the figures are indeterminable exactly (see UNRWA pamphlet "Emergency 1967" which gives slightly higher figures).

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These figures should be read in connection with the pamphlet, 'The Arab Refugee Problem', by Sidney Shipton.

THE CITY OF JERUSALEM.

1. United Nations responsibility in Jerusalem originated in the General Assembly Resolution of November 29th, 1947. This envisaged a special regime designed primarily to "protect and preserve the unique spiritual and religious interests located in the City." The City was to be administered by the U.N.
2. The Arabs rejected this outright. The Jewish Agency accepted it, under protest.
3. The Assembly's proposals came to nothing. The Arabs succeeded in destroying the entire partition plan, except those sections of it which the Jews contrived to implement themselves.
4. In April 1948, the Trusteeship Council (the U.N. administering authority) abandoned the task of "elaborating" the special international regime. It proved impracticable.
5. During the prolonged siege of Jerusalem in 1948, when Arab forces rained devastation on the Holy City, the U.N. was unable to protect it.
6. In the House of Commons, on April 14th, 1949, Mr. Christopher Mayhew, the then Foreign Under Secretary, expressed the Government's strong doubts as to the possibility of imposing an international regime.
7. On December 9th, 1949, the General Assembly asked the Trusteeship Council to complete the preparation of the Statute of Jerusalem, enjoining it "not to allow any actions taken by any interested government or governments to divert it from adopting and implementing the 'Statute of Jerusalem'." At that time Jordan was strongly objecting to internationalisation. Having obtained de facto control of the Old City by the Armistice Agreement, she was not prepared to yield it in favour of an international regime.
8. The Trusteeship Council completed a draft Statute on April 4th, 1950, but concluded that it could not be carried into effect.
9. Although Israel came to reject internationalism, the legitimacy of international interest in the Holy Places was never, of course, denied. In a memorandum submitted to the Trusteeship Council by the Israeli Government on May 26th, 1949, an offer was made of "full co-operation in seeking and implementing a solution of the Jerusalem question whereby the responsibility of the United Nations for the Holy Places may be reconciled with the freedom and independence of the City and its inhabitants."
10. The situation today is that Israel rejects the internationalisation of the entire city as undesirable and totally impracticable. International control would involve supervision by countries which have no religious interests in the Holy Places, e.g. Buddhist countries, and by countries which are officially non-religious. Israel proposes that the religious authorities should have complete autonomy over their own institutions and that freedom of access for all should be guaranteed.

The Israeli Foreign Minister, Mr. Eban, speaking of the Holy Places at the U.N. General Assembly on June 26th, 1967, said: "We are taking steps to ensure that the interest of the world's religions in the peace, sanctity of the Holy Places, and free access thereto, is expressed in agreed form. For the first time in twenty years, Jerusalem is not divided, is not a military frontier, and offers access to the shrines of all three great religions. Conditions are thus ripe for the fulfilment of spiritual yearnings and ideals."

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